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INTRODUCTION

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Where we once had two parties, each sprawled across the country, north and south, east and west, we now have two distinct coalitions defined primarily by density. The old dichotomies—red state/blue state, city/suburb—are just too simplistic to capture today’s much more complex picture, which often as not is painted in shades of pink, purple and mauve. Welcome to America’s new map.¹

—*Richard Florida*

While colored state maps have been a staple of media coverage of presidential elections for decades, the colors used to identify candidates and parties have been inconsistent over time.² However, starting with the 2000 presidential election, the red state, blue state configuration became the manner by which Republican- and Democratic-voting states are more-or-less universally categorized. In the subsequent two decades, the red state, blue state motif has become so firmly entrenched that it is now used as shorthand to account for outcomes as diverse as the prevalence of Lyme disease, divorce, teen pregnancy, and a host of consumer and lifestyle behaviors.³

Yet, just because the red state, blue state framework is ubiquitous does not mean it accurately captures the fissures defining contemporary American politics. Most obviously, while state boundaries define the spaces by which votes in presidential and other statewide elections are aggregated, there is variation in every state’s levels of par-

tisan support and representation. An entire state is never completely red or blue. There have always been blue parts of red states and vice versa.

Take, for instance, Utah. Although the state is regarded of as one of the most Republican in the nation, Utah ranks second in the nation for protections for LGBTQ people (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) and its largest city, Salt Lake City, is led by Democrat Erin Mendenhall.⁴ In fact, the last time a Republican served as the mayor of Salt Lake City was in 1974.⁵ On the other end of the spectrum are Maryland and Massachusetts, two of the most liberal states in the country. Yet, in 2018, Maryland Democrat Ben Cardin won reelection to the U.S. Senate with nearly 65 percent of the vote and the Democrats picked up a handful of seats in the statehouse, even as Republican governor Larry Hogan was reelected by nearly twelve points. In Massachusetts, Republican governor Charlie Baker cruised to a second term, while Democrat Elizabeth Warren was reelected to the U.S. Senate with more than 60 percent of the vote. The Democrats also maintained control of all nine of Massachusetts's U.S. House seats and strengthened their majorities in both chambers of that statehouse.

We are not the first to note the shortcomings of the red state, blue state paradigm. Many others, inside and outside of academia, make this point.⁶ We add a new dimension to this literature by disentangling the spatial underpinnings of intrastate electoral and policy competition. We also examine how the political, cultural, demographic, and economic differences distinguishing Democratic-voting blue metros from Republican-voting outlying rural and exurban areas reverberate in electoral politics and state policymaking. While we focus our analysis on thirteen selected swing states, our thesis addresses the tensions between liberal urban spaces and conservative rural spaces that not only underlie red state, blue state voting patterns in statewide elections but also affect statehouse, county commission, mayoral, city council, and congressional races and the policies promoted by these candidates and elected officials. Our analysis goes beyond the use of red states versus blue states in the Electoral College and applies the concept to the political and policy dynamics within states.

An effort to implement background checks for private gun sales in Nevada captures these dynamics. In 2013, Republican governor Brian

Sandoval vetoed SB (Senate Bill) 221, passed by the urban-dominated, Democratic-controlled legislature, requiring background checks for private gun purchases or transfers. In response to the governor's veto, Question 1, requiring background checks for private gun sales or transfers, qualified for the November 2016 ballot.⁷ The initiative passed by fewer than 10,000 votes after receiving majority support in one county—Clark County—home to Las Vegas, where Question 1 passed by more than 100,000 votes. However, the state's Republican attorney general, backed by the Republican governor, refused to implement the initiative over technical issues stemming from the initiative's language. Consequently, the initiative languished and remained unimplemented for more than two years.

In the aftermath of the 1 October (2017) mass shooting on the Las Vegas Strip, Nevada Democrats campaigned in support of stronger gun regulations. After the party's 2018 rout of Republicans, which delivered unified control of state government, one of the first bills signed into law by Democratic governor Steve Sisolak was SB 143 (2019) implementing Question 1's background check requirements. Following the bill's signing, Republican legislators opined that the bill was rushed, even though SB 143 implemented an initiative passed more than two years earlier and the bill received an eight-hour joint chamber hearing. Republican legislators suggested the bill did not reflect their belief that "most of our state is rural," ignoring the fact that a small percent of Nevadans reside in the state's rural (or non-core-based) counties.⁸ Rural county sheriffs pledged not to enforce the law, and rural county commissioners passed resolutions declaring their counties as "Second Amendment Sanctuary" zones.⁹

The background check example highlights a number of the key themes in this book. Although Nevada is considered a swing state, outside of Clark County, Democratic candidates typically lose by significant vote deficits. However, nearly three-quarters of all Nevadans reside in Clark County, and when unified, Clark is large enough to impose its preferences on all Nevada. Indeed, given the limited scope of the background check policy,¹⁰ what seemed to be a greater concern of some opponents to the measure was that urban Democrats were ignoring the concerns of the rural counties.¹¹ This perspective, of course, is at odds with the principle that "legislators represent people,

not trees or acres,” but it is consistent with research suggesting that the country’s diversifying population fosters perceptions of status loss among those who feel threatened by America’s changing demographics.¹² County-level maps of partisan support showing scattered blue islands amid seas of red reinforce this view.

The battle in swing-state North Carolina over bathroom access provides another example of blue metros, red states politics. In February 2016, the Charlotte city council voted to protect gay and transgender people by allowing them to use public restrooms consistent with their preferred gender identity. Because of a successful gerrymander, Republicans dominated the statehouse and soon thereafter used their stranglehold on state government to call a special session. Republicans, in a single day, introduced, passed, and signed into law HB (House Bill) 2, the “Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act.” The legislation required individuals in government buildings to use restrooms corresponding to the sex identified on their birth certificate. The bill also overturned local anti-discrimination LGBTQ protection ordinances and prohibited local governments from strengthening such ordinances moving forward.¹³

Examining the vote for HB 2 suggests a geographic asymmetry. Within the seventeen-member Mecklenburg delegation (the county in which Charlotte, the largest metro in North Carolina, sits), six Republicans voted in favor, four Democrats voted in opposition, and five Democrats and two Republicans were either absent or did not vote. Thus, of the 114 total votes in favor of the bill, Mecklenburg legislators cast just six of these votes (roughly 5 percent of the total). In contrast, a fifth of the legislators who were absent, voted no, or abstained represented districts in Mecklenburg County. In addition, nine legislators representing districts in North Carolina’s other major metro region, Raleigh, either voted no or did not vote.

A controversy that began in North Carolina with a single municipality seeking to present itself as a tolerant community reverberated far and wide. Despite legal challenges to the North Carolina law, Republican state legislators across the country proposed similar legislation. Not content to sit by idly as a new front in the country’s culture war opened, legislatures in some blue states then pushed bills strengthening LGBTQ protections.

The issue also resonated economically. After the bill's passage, Adidas, Deutsche Bank, Eli Lilly, PayPal, and other companies withdrew plans for investments in North Carolina. Entertainers canceled concerts. The National Basketball Association (NBA), the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) relocated sporting events from the state. In total, the Associated Press estimated that the legislation cost North Carolina close to \$4 billion in lost business.¹⁴

In an effort to save face, the North Carolina legislature revised the "Public Facilities Privacy and Security Act." The replacement legislation eliminated the "bathroom ban," but maintained the prohibitions on local governments from enacting nondiscrimination ordinances (also known as "preemption"), a restraint that ensured that local governments would not overstep their bounds by promoting policies repellent to the Republican legislative majority.¹⁵ Years later, Charlotte still spends millions on marketing to restore the city's image in the aftermath of HB 2.¹⁶ Some blue states maintain policies prohibiting state-funded travel to North Carolina.

It is no accident that both state examples stem from disputes over sociocultural issues. As explored in chapter 2, such value-driven disputes are ground zero for partisan and, by extension, geographic polarization. Las Vegas, with its overwhelming population relative to the rest of Nevada, secured its interests through recently obtained hegemony over state government via the 2018 election. In contrast, even though Mecklenburg is the largest county in the state, it accounts for just 10 percent of North Carolina's population. Mecklenburg's delegation is not large enough to drive outcomes in the North Carolina legislature. Moreover, because of a Republican gerrymander, the county's delegation at the time of the HB 2 vote split 9-8 in favor of the Democrats even though Democrats held a 20-point voter registration advantage over the GOP in the county. Charlotte may be small relative to the rest of the state, but when combined with other metros along North Carolina's I-85 Corridor, which includes the Research Triangle (Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill), it contributes to a larger blue urban space that makes North Carolina a swing state.

More generally, the Nevada background check and the North Carolina bathroom bills are examples of the conflicts between what jour-

nalist Ron Brownstein calls “the coalition of transformation” versus “the coalition of restoration.”¹⁷ We unpack how geography and demographics underlying these diverging world views interact with electoral and policymaking institutions to determine political outcomes. While these tensions exist across the country and at all levels of government, we focus our analysis on the swing states that currently hold the balance of power in the Electoral College and the U.S. Senate. In the next sections, we specify our case selection criteria, present the framework that guides our examination of the urban/rural divide in the swing states, and provide a brief overview of our data and measurements. The chapter concludes with a summary of how the remainder of the book is organized.

BLUE METROS, RED STATES CASES

In 2016, Republican Donald Trump was elected president despite losing eighty-eight of the 100 most populated counties in America. Collectively, these counties accounted for the bulk of Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton’s popular vote advantage.¹⁸ Two years later, the Democrats took majority control of the U.S. House of Representatives, mostly by flipping seats in suburban districts that ring the nation’s largest metros. These gains came not just in blue states such as California and New Jersey or in swing states such as Colorado, Michigan, and Virginia, but even in red states such as Kansas, Oklahoma, and Utah.

By accelerating the conflation of density, race and ethnicity, and partisanship, the 2016 and 2018 elections fortified the urban/rural delineation of the parties’ electoral bases. For most voters, the partisanship of their geography in statewide elections is baked in depending on the relative sizes of the urban and rural blocs in their respective states. From this perspective, Nebraska and Utah are red states because Omaha and Salt Lake City lack the diversity and scale to offset the Republican advantages in the outlying areas. California and New Jersey are blue states because their diverse, massive urban population centers dwarf each state’s less diverse and less populated hinterlands. Swing states are places where neither bloc dominates, and as our analysis demonstrates, outcomes in these states are often determined by

the degree to which infrequent voters participate in elections and how much short-term political influences shuffle the preferences of suburban voters—especially those residing in fast-growth, urbanizing suburbs, what Robert Lang and Jennifer LeFurgy label “boomburbs.”¹⁹

While our analysis certainly has implications for how the swing states may shape the composition of the federal government come January 2021 and beyond, that is not the book’s sole focus. We also examine the political dynamic within the swing states by considering how swing state metros navigate the intrastate urban/rural divide. In total, our case analysis considers thirteen swing states and twenty-seven million-plus metros (see table 1-1). The swing states were determined by two criteria: a 2016 presidential vote margin within ten points and at least one metropolitan area exceeding 1 million residents. The second criterion excludes three northern swing states—Iowa (Trump +9.4), Maine (Clinton +2.9), and New Hampshire (Clinton +0.4)—that had 2016 margins within ten points. In total, the thirteen swing states covered in this volume contain over 40 percent of the country’s total population and include seven of the ten most populous states.

We use the 1 million population threshold to differentiate large, high-density metros from smaller-scale regions (as of 2019, there are fifty-three such metros in the United States).²⁰ Large metros maintain extensive public infrastructure, including multimodal transportation networks; are responsible for delivering significant public services; and are supported by substantial administrative apparatuses. The metros also generate most of the nation’s foreign trade and GDP and account for the vast share of patents and new technology.²¹ Almost every major seaport and airport, which manage the nation’s logistics and supply chains, is found within a million-plus metro. The core cities within large metros house large concentrations of minorities and liberal whites. The urban/rural divide is not a significant characteristic in places such as Maine, New Hampshire, or Iowa, which feature smaller-scaled metros and less-diverse demographics.²²

Table 1-1 organizes the states regionally to capture their dispersion across the country’s physical space as well as to highlight geographic clusters. The states’ number of Electoral College votes are included in the table to provide a sense of their relative populations and their ability to influence presidential elections.

TABLE 1-1. Blue Metros and Red States Case Studies

State	2016 Margin	Electoral College Votes	Metros
<i>Mid-Atlantic</i>			
Pennsylvania	Trump +0.7	20	Philadelphia and Pittsburgh
Virginia	Clinton +5.3	13	Northern Virginia, Richmond, and Virginia Beach
<i>South Atlantic</i>			
Georgia	Trump +5.2	16	Atlanta
North Carolina	Trump +3.7	15	Charlotte and Raleigh
<i>Midwest</i>			
Michigan	Trump +0.2	16	Detroit and Grand Rapids
Ohio	Trump +8.1	18	Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus
<i>Upper Midwest</i>			
Minnesota	Clinton +1.5	10	Minneapolis
Wisconsin	Trump +0.8	10	Milwaukee
<i>Mountain West</i>			
Arizona	Trump +3.5	11	Phoenix and Tucson
Colorado	Clinton +4.9	9	Denver
Nevada	Clinton +2.4	6	Las Vegas
<i>Florida and Texas</i>			
Florida	Trump +1.2	29	Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, and Tampa
Texas	Trump +9.0	38	Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio

Notes: States were selected based upon two criteria: A 2016 presidential vote margin of ten points or less and at least one million-plus metro. Note that million-plus metro regions are labeled by their principal cities. The only expectation is we label the “Arlington-Alexandria” section of the Washington, D.C., MSA as “Northern Virginia.” We used metropolitan statistical areas as the metro unit of analysis. We did not use the larger census regional unit of combined statistical areas. Thus, even though the smaller Durham-Chapel Hill, NC MSA is adjacent to the larger Raleigh, NC MSA and maintains significant economic linkages with its neighbor, data for the Durham-Chapel Hill, NC MSA are not added to the Raleigh MSA. We recognize that North Carolina’s “Research Triangle” has a common regional identity, but we sought to maintain consistent statistical definitions throughout the book.

Sources: 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year estimates as aggregated by censusreporter.org and secretary of state websites.

Collectively, the states provide differing contexts for studying how the urban/rural divide affects state politics and policy. Pennsylvania and Virginia are ground zero for the partisan battle for the suburbs. Wisconsin and Minnesota are fading blue states with little diversity outside of their metro regions, but both have histories of progressivism and are culturally Northern.²³ The industrial states of Ohio and Michigan illuminate the economic challenges facing former industrial powers in a digital age. Georgia and North Carolina feature emerging economies, diverse demography, and large shares of college-educated graduates concentrated in their metros. The rapidly diversifying and urbanizing Mountain West states of Arizona, Colorado, and Nevada have fast growing metropolitan regions that constitute the majority of their states' populations. With multiple million-plus metros, Texas and Florida are massive, highly diverse states that, together, account for nearly a quarter of the Electoral College votes needed to win the presidency. Both states are so large in scale that they are the equivalent of nation states in economic terms and surpass the GDP output of most other countries.²⁴

In the chapters that follow, we explore these states and their million-plus metros to show how patterns of intrastate diversity, density, and economic concentration affect electoral outcomes and shape policy decisions. These case studies consider how institutional variables (for example, legislative professionalism, redistricting, and home rule) affect the distribution of political power within states and how these arrangements either hinder or facilitate metro influence in policymaking. In the next section, we provide an overview of our thesis detailing how sociocultural geography shapes how diversity is experienced and the consequences it has for how million-plus metros versus smaller regions and rural areas respond to their state's changing demographic and economic landscapes.

DIVERSITY AND ITS GEOGRAPHY

At the federal level, the institutional arrangements that allocate political power, particularly the state-driven apportionment of the U.S. Senate and its effects on the allocation of Electoral College votes, underrepresent urban America's interests. A similar dynamic exists

at the state level. As we highlight in chapter 2, in state politics, major metros often punch below their demographic and economic weight, allowing rural and exurban voters to impose policies potentially adverse to the interests of blue metros. North Carolina's preemption of Charlotte's efforts to implement an antidiscrimination ordinance is one example of these undercurrents. In Georgia, another swing state, the decision by Republicans to sharply restrict access to abortion by passing a fetal-heartbeat bill—legislation that led to television and movie production companies pulling projects from the state—is another.²⁵ This is no small concern. Atlanta recently emerged as “Hollywood East” and is now second to Los Angeles in film and television production.

In both instances, the actions of Republicans, often representing voters outside million-plus metros, imposed policies that inflicted both reputational and economic costs on their states' blue metros. That both of these examples come from southern states speaks to the essence of our thesis: the geography within the geography and the diversity within the diversity matters.

In every swing state with a million-plus metro, some variant of the urban/rural divide exists. But at what latitude and, to a lesser extent, at what longitude the blue metro, red state pairing is situated determines how race, immigration, and the country's changing demography are experienced and perceived. Geography shapes not just the composition and dispersion of a state's nonwhite population but also what these patterns engender culturally and how value differences manifest themselves at the ballot box and in policy. To achieve their agendas, major metros need to be integrated, open, and forward thinking. To the degree that there is a metro ethos, diversity acceptance is a key component, a value that is mostly not shared outside million-plus metros.

Table 1-2 groups the thirteen swing states in terms of the distribution of diversity in their million-plus metros versus smaller metros and rural areas and the major composition of their minority populations. As we detail in chapter 2, one of our building blocks is research examining the causes and consequences of regional cultural geography, particularly as it relates to the establishment, development, and migration from the northern and southern parts of the country. These

TABLE 1-2. Regional Patterns of Diversity and Composition among the Thirteen Swing States

Regions	States	Diversity Dispersion	Diversity Composition
Midwest/ Mid-Atlantic	MI, MN, OH	Semi-diverse metro	Black
	PA, WI	Nondiverse nonmetro	
South/ Mid-Atlantic/ Texas	GA, NC, TX, VA	Diverse metro	Black, Latino, and emerging Asian
		Diverse nonmetro	
Mountain West/ Florida	AZ, CO, FL, NV	Diverse metro	Latino, some Black, Native, and Asian
		Semi-diverse nonmetro	

cultural differences affect regional variation in the composition and dispersion of the states' diversity and how these differences structure cultural and social schisms.

The four Midwestern states—Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin (and Mid-Atlantic Pennsylvania)—have white populations exceeding the national average. To the degree to which these states have diversity, it is predominately African American and concentrated in the larger metros. Rural areas and smaller cities are mostly white, creating the starkest urban/rural demographic difference among our three state groupings. Pennsylvania partly follows the same pattern. There are, however, differences between Pennsylvania's metros. Pittsburgh's white population share exceeds the national average, while Philadelphia's is consistent with the national average. Philadelphia also has greater diversity within its diversity compared to Pittsburgh because it lies within the Mid-Atlantic region.

The states in the south also have diverse metros, but unlike the first grouping, these states also have substantial diversity in rural areas. Consequently, diversity is patterned differently in the Midwest and Pennsylvania compared to the south. In the north, diversity exists mostly in major metros, while in the south, it extends to smaller metros and rural areas. Thus we include Texas in this group. Yet, because of

its physical expanse, Texas's rural population mix differs from most other southern states. Akin to Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia, in east Texas, rural diversity generally is African American. However, in rural central and western Texas, Latinos dominate, a demographic group that recently increased in many southern states, including Georgia and North Carolina. Texas is a hybrid state. In the east, its demography aligns more with the south, but by San Antonio, the state is similar to the west. Still, as former Confederate states, Georgia, North Carolina, and to a lesser extent Texas and Virginia, remain rooted in the Southern Black/white slavery-post-slavery context. The history creates a very different cultural legacy compared to the swing states in the Midwest, Mid-Atlantic, and Mountain West.

Mountain West states differ from the other two groups in three important respects. First, Arizona, Colorado, and Nevada have diverse million-plus metros and some diversity in their smaller cities and rural towns. Although the diversity dispersion in these states is less than what exists in the south and in Texas, it is greater than what we observe in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic states. Second, what Robert Lang, Andrea Sarzynski, and Mark Muro call the "Mountain Megas,"²⁶ Denver, Phoenix, and Las Vegas, form dominant population centers accounting for roughly one-half, two-thirds, and three-quarters of their state's population, respectively. By comparison, Dallas is the fourth largest American metropolitan statistical areas (MSA), but constitutes less than 30 percent of Texas's population. Third, Mountain West states' diversity features large shares of Asian Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos. Only Nevada has a sizeable African American population, which resides almost exclusively in Las Vegas.

We group Florida with Mountain West swing states because it, too, has diversity within its diversity (the states also were settled at roughly the same time, booming in the post-WWII decades). Like the southern and northern states, Florida has a substantial African American population (15 percent), but Florida's Black population is dwarfed by the state's Latino residents, and roughly two-thirds of all Florida African Americans reside in the state's four million-plus metros. Like Mountain West states, Florida has a large share of immigrants and some diversity in its smaller metros and rural areas, but the diversity is less extensive when compared to the other southern states.

Certainly, the case can be made for either swapping Florida and Texas or placing them in a separate category. Unlike the western states with highly concentrated population centers, Florida and Texas each contain four separate million-plus metros. Similar to the Mountain West states, however, each state has diversity within its diversity but divergent patterns of rural diversity. Regardless of which set of considerations one chooses to elevate over the others, Florida and Texas defy easy classification—a conclusion that cultural geographers such as Wilbur Zelinsky came to fifty years ago.²⁷

To a lesser degree, these classification difficulties extend to Virginia. Unlike Florida and Texas, the one-time Confederate capital has voted strongly Democratic in recent elections. The transition has occurred so rapidly that *Politico* writer Charles Mahtesian argues that Virginia hardly had time to be a true swing state.²⁸ In terms of population, Virginia is much less populous than Florida or Texas. But like Florida and Texas, Virginia contains multiple million-plus metros, and, similar to those states' major metros, Virginia has significant inter-metro differences in terms of diversity composition.

Analytically, the existence of multiple million-plus metros within some of our states is advantageous. In chapter 2, we present data from the 2016 presidential election demonstrating how the diversity within the diversity affects statewide voting patterns. We find a negative relationship between a state's Black population share and support for Hillary Clinton. In states where African Americans are a smaller share of the minority population—that is, where there is diversity within the diversity—Clinton performed much stronger. These patterns track with geography and are attributable to spatial differences in the voting behavior among whites. In the southern states, where Blacks form the largest minority group and there is spatial integration among Blacks and whites, Donald Trump's margin among white voters increased (see figures 2-1 and 2-2). In states where there is greater diversity within the diversity, Trump's support among whites was much weaker. Our analysis shows that whites who are exposed to the hyper-diversity of big metros vote more Democratic than whites from regions with less complex diversity.

The metros in Florida, Texas, and Virginia allow us to assess if similar effects exist within states. For instance, while all three of Virgin-

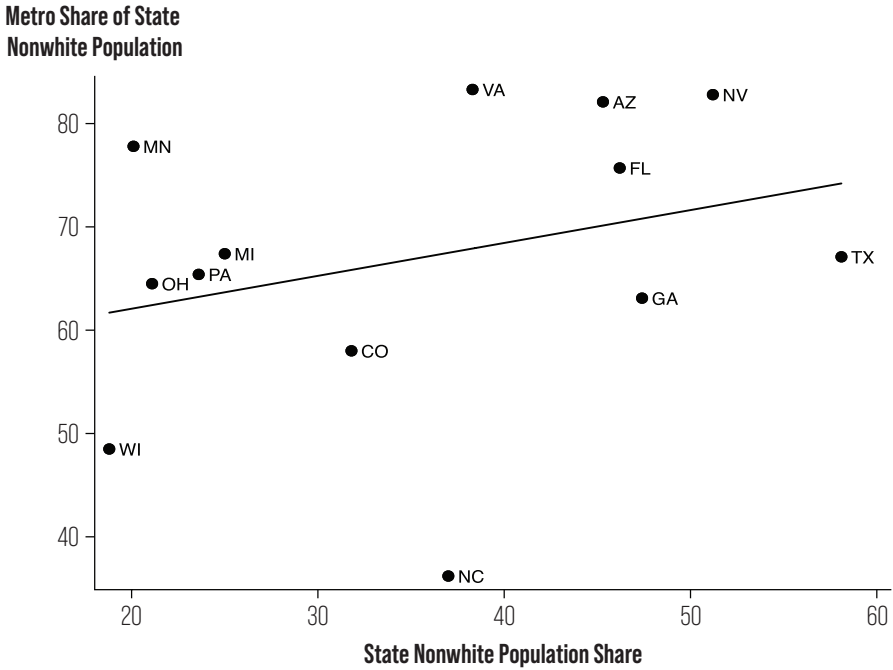
ia's metros have similar nonwhite population shares, in Richmond and Virginia Beach, this diversity is largely African American. However, in Northern Virginia, which is part of the larger Washington, D.C., MSA, there is much greater diversity within the diversity, and similar to metros such as Austin, Denver, Raleigh, and Tucson, it has a large share of college-educated residents. Florida's metros provide similar contrasts. The diversity in Jacksonville and Tampa is primarily African American, while Orlando and Miami feature smaller shares of Blacks and larger numbers of Latinos. The four Texas metros offer another set of comparisons. Austin is overwhelmingly white, but the culture of its geography differs from the rest of Texas due to its founding by Central Europeans as opposed to the Scots-Irish who migrated into much of the rest of the state.²⁹ San Antonio has the largest share of Latinos, while Dallas and Houston have large shares of African Americans. Thus, while we expect all of these metros to be more Democrat oriented compared to their state's nonmetro areas, these effects should be stronger in the metros with greater diversity within their diversity.

Ohio, with its three million-plus metros, offers a different type of intrastate comparison. Lacking the variation in diversity composition and dispersion of Florida, Texas, and Virginia, the spatial variation of Ohio's three metros—Cleveland in the north, Columbus in the center, and Cincinnati in the south—cut across the Northern, Midland, and Southern cultural zones according to a map of the cultural regions of the United States by Zelinsky.³⁰

Figure 1-1, which plots the nonwhite population shares in each state against the share of each state's nonwhite population that resides within the state's million-plus metros, demonstrates the degree to which diversity is clustered in large urban regions. Note that for states with multiple million-plus metros, the data are combined. These data do not control for variation in the composition of each state's minority populations.

The positive slope of the trend line suggests that, in general, the more diverse the state, the higher the concentration of diversity in the biggest metros. However, due to regional variation, the slope is not particularly steep. In terms of our thirteen swing states, as expected, Pennsylvania and the four Midwestern states are clustered on the left side of the figure, suggesting they have limited diversity and that this

FIGURE 1-1. Concentration of Statewide Nonwhite Population Shares in Million-Plus Metros (2017)



diversity is largely within the million-plus metros. This is particularly the case for Minneapolis, which constitutes 62 percent of Minnesota’s population but houses over three-quarters of the state’s minority population. In Wisconsin, which has the smallest major metro population share of the thirteen states, Milwaukee constitutes 27 percent of the state’s population but maintains nearly half Wisconsin’s nonwhite population, the largest percentage point discrepancy among any of our million-plus metro/rest of state pairings.

Due to the differences in the size of major metros relative to their state populations, the relationships for the other groups of states is less obvious. For instance, over 82 percent of Arizonans live in metro Phoenix and Tucson compared to 34 percent of North Carolinians who reside in Charlotte and Raleigh. Arizona’s million-plus metro population is so dominant that there is little population to be dispersed in smaller metros and rural areas. In North Carolina, however, both the

bulk of the state's population and the state's nonwhite population resides outside of Charlotte and Raleigh, with many North Carolinians living in a larger, extended urban region known as the Piedmont or the I-85 Corridor.³¹

In Texas and southern swing states, except for Virginia, each state's million-plus metros have diversity concentrations that are more-or-less consistent with their share of total population. In Georgia, Texas, and North Carolina, 37 percent, 33 percent, and 64 percent, respectively, of those states' nonwhite populations are located outside of their major metropolitan areas. Within this group of states, Virginia, the most urbanized one, is the outlier. The state's three million-plus metros constitute 71 percent of Virginia's population but are home to more than 83 percent of Virginia's minorities. As suggested, there also is growing divergence in terms of the minority composition of Virginia's metros. Northern Virginia, which includes Asian American, Latino, and foreign-born population shares that are all roughly twice the state average, has a demographic profile similar to Mid-Atlantic states, such as New Jersey. The demographics of Richmond and Virginia Beach are more like the rest of the south. Despite the state's changing demography and urbanization, Black rural pockets persist in Virginia's coastal plains region.

In the three Mountain West swing states and Florida, diversity concentrates in million-plus metros but they maintain greater relative diversity dispersion compared to Pennsylvania and the Midwest. This is particularly the case for Colorado. Because of the large rural, Native American and Latino populations, more than 40 percent of minorities in Colorado reside outside of metro Denver. Although Arizona and Nevada have highly concentrated urban populations (82.1 and 73.5 percent of state population share, respectively), roughly 18 percent of each state's nonwhite population is located in smaller metros and rural areas. In Florida, another highly urbanized state, a quarter of the minority population resides outside of the state's four million-plus metros.

DEFINITIONS AND DATA

The book uses qualitative and quantitative data to examine electoral and policy differences between million-plus metros and smaller metros/rural areas in thirteen swing states. Comparing and contrasting major metropolitan areas and smaller/nonmetro regions necessitates defining each. We use the terms major metro, city, or urban interchangeably to refer to the MSAs designated by the U.S. census. Except for Northern Virginia, we identify million-plus metros by their principal or largest cities rather than by their formal MSA titles (for example, Orlando instead of Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL MSA). Because six of our metro regions—Northern Virginia, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and Virginia Beach—extend into multiple states, except for table 2-3, we adjust the data of these metros to include only the counties within the thirteen swing states. Box 1-1 defines the geographic terms derived from the census data that we use throughout.

Spaces not within major metros are referred to as smaller metros, rural, nonmetro, or nonurban. This bifurcation of space means that MSAs with populations below 1 million are classified as “smaller metros” and their data are included with the “rest of state” outside the major metros. The effect of this on our analysis depends on a state’s size. In a small state, a smaller metro may constitute a fairly large share of state population, while a similar-size or larger metro in a more populated state may be less consequential for understanding intrastate politics and policy dynamics. For instance, in Nevada, the least populated of the thirteen swing states we consider, metro Reno, with 425,000 residents, accounts for 15 percent of Nevada’s population. However, it is a fifth the size of Las Vegas, and it is the 114th largest metro in the country. By comparison, Austin, which is slightly smaller than Las Vegas, is home to less than 8 percent of Texans.

In total, seventeen of the 100 largest metros with populations below 1 million are in the swing states. These smaller metros are concentrated primarily in the more populated states.³² The largest two such metros, McAllen and El Paso, are in Texas. With five such metros, Florida has the most (Sarasota, Fort Myers, Lakeland, Daytona, Palm Bay), followed by North Carolina with three (Greensboro,

BOX 1-1. Geographic Definitions

Throughout the book, we employ a number of geographic concepts, the most important of which is the Office of Management and Budget (OMB)-defined “metropolitan statistical area” (MSA).^a An MSA is one of three “core-based statistical areas” (CBSA) established by OMB to classify American population clusters. The other CBSAs are “combined statistical areas” (CSA) and “micropolitan statistical areas” (MicroSA). OMB also identifies “urban cores,” and subregional geographic constructs such as “principal cities,” the largest city in an MSA or MicroSA, and “census-designated places,” unincorporated communities, often proximate to principal cities, with significant populations.^b The census began tracking these spaces in 1980.

The building blocks for all CBSAs are counties. OMB defines an MSA as having an “urban core” exceeding 50,000 residents that maintains an economic interdependence via commuting, either within or to adjacent counties, based on an “employment-interchange measure” (EIM). If a county maintains at least 25 percent of its households commuting to a “central county” (a 25 percent-plus EIM), then the two counties join in a common MSA. The same is true for a MicroSA, only the urban core contains between 10,000 to 50,000 residents. A CSA is defined as a combination of MSAs and/or MicroSAs that maintain an EIM of between 15 to 25 percent.^c EIMs and MSA county components are updated annually via the American Community Survey.

In addition to OMB-defined urban places, scholars affiliated with the Metropolitan In-

a. The OMB is responsible for codifying the geographic definitions used by the Bureau of the Census, which is under the U.S. Department of Commerce.

b. Because the 2000 “Millennium Census” introduced such a radically altered population geography from the preceding 1990 census, scholars at the Brookings Institution developed a “field guide” to assist researchers using the new categories; see William H. Frey, Jill H. Wilson, Alan Berube, and Audrey Singer, “Tracking Metropolitan America into the 21st Century: A Field Guide to the New Metropolitan and Micropolitan Definitions,” in *Redefining Urban and Suburban America: Evidence from the Census 2000*, volume 3, edited by Alan Berube, Bruce Katz, and Robert E. Lang (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2006), pp. 191–234. In the same volume, Robert E. Lang and Dawn Dhavale published the first comprehensive analysis covering micropolitan areas; see Robert E. Lang and Dawn Dhavale, “Micropolitan America: A Brand New Geography,” in *Redefining Cities and Suburbs: Evidence from the Census 2000*, volume 3, pp. 235–58.

c. A detailed summation of these concepts can be found in Robert E. Lang and Arthur C. Nelson, “Megapolitan America: Defining and Applying a New Geography,” in *Megaregions: Planning for Global Competitiveness*, edited by Catherine Ross (Washington: Island Press, 2009), pp. 107–26.

stitute at Virginia Tech in Alexandria, Virginia,^d developed multiple geographic constructs based in census and commercial data.^e Under the Metropolitan Institute's "new metropolis" research initiative, they advanced ideas such as "megapolitan areas," "boomburbs," "edgeless cities," "metroburbs," and "world cities."^f Part of the Metropolitan Institute's new metropolis thinking has been applied to politics. In 2008, Robert Lang, Thomas Sanchez, and Alan Berube published a metropolitan classification system based on a county's density and diversity that tracked presidential and congressional voting trends since 2000 for all U.S. urban regions exceeding 1 million residents.^g However, this book represents the first effort to apply multiple new metropolis concepts to comprehensively analyze state and

d. Robert Lang began as director of the Metropolitan Institute in 2001 and was later joined by urban planner Arthur C. Nelson as codirector in 2004. Urban geographers Paul L. Knox, who was dean of Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies, and Peter J. Taylor, who ran Loughborough's Globalization and World Cities (GaWC) research network, were Metropolitan Institute faculty affiliates for several years in the mid 2000s.

e. For a discussion of explosion of these labels, see Peter J. Taylor and Robert E. Lang, "The Shock of the New: 100 Concepts Describing Recent Urban Change," *Environment and Planning* 36 (June 2004), pp. 951–58.

f. See Robert E. Lang, *Edgeless Cities: Exploring the Elusive Metropolis* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2003); Robert E. Lang and Jennifer B. LeFurgy, *Boomburbs: The Rise of America's Accidental Cities* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2007); Robert E. Lang, Edward J. Blakely, and Megan Zimmerman-Gough, "Keys to the New Metropolis: America's Big, Fast-Growing Suburban Counties," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71 (Autumn 2005), pp. 381–91; Arthur C. Nelson and Robert E. Lang, *Megapolitan America: A New Vision for Understanding America's Metropolitan Geography* (Chicago: American Planning Association Press, 2011); Paul L. Knox, *Metroburbs, USA* (Rutgers University Press, 2008); Peter J. Taylor and Robert E. Lang, "U.S. Cities in the 'World City Network,'" Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program Report, February 2005. For a history of the megapolitan concept, see Robert E. Lang, Jaewon Lim, and Karen A. Danielsen, "The Origin, Evolution, and Application of the Megapolitan Area Concept," *International Journal of Urban Sciences* 24 (January 2020), pp. 1–12.

g. Robert E. Lang, Thomas W. Sanchez, and Alan Berube, "The New Suburban Politics: A County-Based Analysis of Metropolitan Voting Trends since 2000," in *The Future of Red, Blue, and Purple America: Election Demographics, 2008 and Beyond*, edited by Ruy Teixeira (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2008), pp. 25–49. A similar typology was first used in Robert E. Lang and Thomas W. Sanchez, "The New Metropolitcs: Interpreting Recent Elections using a County-Based Regional Typology," *Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech 2006 Election Brief Series* (Metropolitan Institute at Virginia Tech), pp. 1–19, www.researchgate.net/publication/230820734_The_new_metro_politics_Interpreting_recent_presidential_elections_using_a_county-based_regional_typology.

national politics, including intrastate conflict between million-plus metros and the rest of the state.

Finally, it is worth noting that, during the Clinton administration, the OMB considered the idea of creating a large-scale metropolitan category that it labeled “megapolitan areas.”^h The metropolitan area category had grown so broad that it lost meaning because it included places ranging from the New York MSA, with nearly 20 million residents, down to the Carson City MSA, with just 55,000 people. The U.S. Census Geography Program proposed that metropolitan areas with urban cores exceeding a million residents (about forty regions in 2000) be reclassified as megapolitan areas. Thus the census would feature a three-tier, core-based urban hierarchy: micros (with 10,000 to 50,000 population cores); metros (with 50,001 to 1,000,000 population cores); and megas (with 1,000,000 or more population cores).ⁱ George W. Bush’s OMB nixed the megapolitan areas in 2001 but retained the micropolitan area geography developed under the Clinton administration.

h. Robert E. Lang and Arthur C. Nelson, “Megapolitan America,” *Places Journal* (November 2011), <https://doi.org/10.22269/111114>.

i. Ibid. Lang and Nelson used the label for their largest urban clusters.

Durham, and Winston-Salem). Ohio (Akron and Toledo), Pennsylvania (Allentown and Harrisburg), and Texas each have two. The other smaller-scale metros in the swing states are Augusta, Georgia, Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Madison, Wisconsin. Given their population shares relative to their states, Colorado Springs and Madison are the two smaller metros that are likely to exert the greatest impact on outcomes, a point that is highlighted in the analyses of Colorado and Wisconsin, respectively.

Throughout the book, we present demographic, economic, electoral, and institutional data for our thirteen states and twenty-seven million-plus metros. These data were collected from publicly available sources, and the specific data sources used are noted in the tables and figures. While these data are insightful, they do not provide a complete picture. To better understand each state’s intrastate cultural, policy, and political dynamics, we present data collected from interviews with state policy experts. The appendix provides a list of all the experts who participated. These experts are primarily academics, and

they were selected because of their knowledge of their states' politics, demographics, and histories.

After participation was secured via an email solicitation, interviews were conducted by phone, recorded, and transcribed by a research assistant.³³ The interviews focused on five open-ended themes central to our thesis:

- Identifying the political dynamic between million-plus metros and the rest of the state and how this affects partisan patterns of voting
- Determining the degree to which million-plus metros and the rest of the state are divided socially and culturally and the implications this has for policy debates and outcomes
- Evaluating how continued demographic change is likely to impact the state's political dynamics in the future
- Examining how salient institutional features such as the location of the state capital, legislative professionalism, term limits, and Dillon's rule constraints on local governments empower or hinder major metros
- Assessing how much political clout a major metro exerts in state politics and how this affects the allocation of state resources

The state experts' responses are incorporated into the book via a qualitative analysis (inspired by the Delphi method of surveying expert opinion).³⁴ Our method identifies common themes that provide a contextual understanding of quantitative data associated with the thirteen states and the twenty-seven million-plus metros. By using a mixed methods approach that combines primary and secondary data, a geographic/historical analysis of each state and region, and the expert opinion of scholars whose knowledge spans politics, policy, urban affairs, and demography, we produce a comprehensive look at the dynamics between blue metros and their red states.

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

The remainder of the book is organized into nine chapters. In chapter 2, we review prior research that informs our analysis and thesis. Here, we consider work examining sociocultural geography to understand the origins and persistence of regional political differences between and within states. The chapter also reviews scholarship examining how demographic, geographic, and economic sorting underlie the blue metros, red states urban/rural divide and how these differences manifest themselves attitudinally. The chapter concludes by evaluating how state and federal electoral and policymaking institutions can empower rural interests at the expense of metros and the implications this has for the representation and advancement of metro policy priorities.

In chapters 3 through 9, we present empirical analyses of the thirteen swing states and twenty-seven million-plus metros. These chapters use a common format. For each state, we provide a summary of the geopolitical “state of play” accompanied by a stylized state map highlighting each state’s political sections, key transportation routes, major cities, and the state capital.³⁵ These discussions are augmented by the presentation of demographic, economic, and electoral data detailing differences between million-plus metros and smaller metros/rural areas in each state. We also show measures of metro governance fragmentation and local government autonomy. These data presentations and the state of play summaries provide the context for assessing the degree to which the preferences of the major metros reinforce or diverge from their states and the consequences this has for representation at the state and federal levels. Discussions of these dynamics are then further developed into a Delphi analysis provided by the state experts.

The state analyses are grouped by chapter, with the exceptions of Florida and Texas, which are covered in their own chapters. Chapter 3 groups the Mid-Atlantic states of Pennsylvania and Virginia together because the largest metro in each state is included in the blue-dominated Northeast Corridor that stretches from Boston to Washington, D.C. The fact that a major section of each state lies within

that corridor is why Pennsylvania and Virginia are swing states. These blue sections offset what otherwise would be red states.

Georgia and North Carolina are examined together in chapter 4 because they anchor a new large-scale and urbanized south. Both states attract domestic and foreign migrants and businesses, as Atlanta and Charlotte have become major logistic and corporate hubs. Both states also support high-tech economies, in greater Atlanta and the Research Triangle of Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill.

Chapter 6 examines the Midwestern states of Michigan and Ohio. Both have relied on heavy manufacturing that has suffered in recent decades. The declining union vote in both states, coupled with limited diversity, has made Michigan and Ohio more conservative and more open to protectionist trade policies.

Minnesota and Wisconsin are covered together in chapter 7 because they share a tradition of Upper Midwest progressive politics. Both states recently have experienced a shift in attitudes among rural voters, who have grown far more conservative in recent years, and outside of their largest metros, both states have very little diversity.

The three states in the Mountain West, Arizona, Colorado, and Nevada, are the focus of chapter 9. These states are fast growing, rapidly diversifying, and have one or two metro regions that account for a vast share of their residents.

Because Florida and Texas are so large scale, the second and third most populous American states, with each containing four separate million-plus metros, they are covered in their own chapters—chapters 5 and 8, respectively.

In the final chapter, we summarize our findings, evaluate their implications for future policy and electoral outcomes, and assess the likelihood that the blue metros will be positioned to move their states from swing states to blue states. In the epilogue, Brookings Institution scholar Molly Reynolds considers the blue metros, red states thesis from the perspective of Washington, D.C., and its consequences for representation and policy at the federal level.

NOTES

1. Richard Florida, "Welcome to Blueburbia . . . and Other Landmarks on America's New Map," *Politico Magazine*, November 2013, www.politico.com/magazine/story/2013/11/06/welcome-to-blueburbia-and-other-landmarks-on-americas-new-map-098957.

2. Ben Zimmer, "Thinking about Tim Russert, Red States and Blue States," *Visual Thesaurus*, June 17, 2008, www.visualthesaurus.com/cm/wordroutes/thinking-about-tim-russert-red-states-and-blue-states/.

3. Robert B. Nadelman and Gary P. Wormser, "Poly-Ticks: Blue State versus Red State for Lyme Disease," *The Lancet* 365 (January 2005), p. 289; Naomi Cahn and June Carbone, *Red Families v. Blue Families* (Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 21; Kiju Jung, Ellen Garabino, Donnel A. Briley, and Jesse Wynhausen, "Blue and Red Voices: Effects of Political Ideology on Consumers' Complaining and Disputing Behavior," *Journal of Consumer Research* 44, no. 3 (October 2017), pp. 477–99; Morning Consult, "Walmart vs. Target: A Political Divide among Shoppers," January 25, 2018, <https://morningconsult.com/2018/01/25/walmart-vs-target-a-political-divide-among-shoppers/>.

4. Courtney Tanner and Scott D. Pierce, "Utah Ranks 2nd in the Nation for Supporting Laws that Protect LGBTQ Community," *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 22, 2019, www.sltrib.com/news/2019/07/22/utahns-support-laws/.

5. Salt Lake City's last Republican mayor was Jake Garn, who later represented Utah in the U.S. Senate for three terms.

6. For an overview of the utility and limitations of the red state, blue state paradigm, as well as a discussion of the various ways in which the paradigm is used, see Geiguen Shin and David J. Webster, "Red States, Blue States: How Well Do the Recent National Election Labels Capture State Political and Policy Differences?" *Social Science Journal* 51, no. 3 (September 2014), pp. 386–97; Edward L. Glaser and Bryce A. Ward, "Myths and Realities of American Political Geography," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 20, no. 2 (Spring 2006), pp. 119–44.

7. With the Republicans gaining unified control of state government after the 2014 elections, similar legislation failed to advance during the 2015 session of the Nevada legislature.

8. Senator Scott Hammond, Senator Keith Pickard, Assemblyman Tom Roberts, Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy, and Assemblyman Glen Leavitt, "The Gun Background Check Bill was Rushed Through Too Quickly," *Nevada Independent*, February 9, 2017, <https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/the-gun-background-check-bill-was-rushed-through-too-quickly>.

9. Ben Margiott, "Rural Nevada Sheriffs Question Whether They Will Enforce New Gun Background Check Law," *MyNews4*, March 4, 2019, <https://mynews4.com/news/local/rural-nevada-sheriffs-question-whether-they-will-enforce-new-gun-background-check-law>; Tim Burmeister, "Do We Stand Up Now . . . Or . . . When They

Come to Get the Guns?" *Elko Daily*, March 20, 2019, https://elkodaily.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/do-we-stand-up-now-or-when-they-come-to/article_83f170d8-3183-50ba-9170-623bc2f949e6.amp.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter&utm_campaign=user-share&__twitter_impression=true.

10. SB 143 (2017) extends background checks that already are required for purchases from licensed gun dealers to include private gun sales and transfers.

11. Legislators from districts within Clark County accounted for 90 percent of the votes in favor of SB 143 (2017) and 33 percent of the votes in opposition to the bill. See Ray Hagar, "Concern that Voice of Rural Nevada Not Being Heard," *Pahrump Valley Times*, March 21, 2019, <https://pvtimes.com/opinion/ray-hagar-concern-that-voice-of-rural-nevada-not-being-heard-67596/>.

12. Quote from *Reynolds v. Sims* 377 U.S. 533 (1964), the Supreme Court case that extended the principle of one person, one vote to state legislative districts. For research assessing perceptions of status loss and its political consequence, see Diana C. Mutz, "Status Threat, Not Economic Hardship, Explains the 2016 Presidential Vote," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 115, April 2018, pp. E4330–E4339; Ashley Jardina, *White Identity Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 21–49; Jonathan A. Metzl, *Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment is Killing America's Heartland* (New York: Basic Books, 2019), pp. 1–22; Christopher Parker and Matt A. Barreto, *Change They Can't Believe In: The Tea Party and Reactionary Politics in America* (Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 20–65, 153–89; John Sides, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck, *Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America* (Princeton University Press, 2018), pp. 201–20.

13. Michael Gordon, Mark S. Price, and Katie Peralta, "Understanding HB2: North Carolina's Newest Law Solidifies State's Role in Defining Discrimination," *Charlotte Observer*, March 26, 2016, www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article68401147.html.

14. CNBC, "'Bathroom Bill' to Cost North Carolina \$3.76 Billion," *CNBC.com*, March 27, 2017, www.cnn.com/2017/03/27/bathroom-bill-to-cost-north-carolina-376-billion.html.

15. Barry Smith, "Cooper H.B. 2 Compromise Doesn't Address 'Home Rule' Question," *Carolina Journal*, February 21, 2017, www.carolinajournal.com/news-article/cooper-h-b-2-compromise-doesnt-address-home-rule-question/.

16. Katherine Peraltas, "Charlotte Still Has to Spend Money to Attract Visitors Turned Off by HB2, Records Show," *Charlotte Observer*, December 17, 2018, www.charlotteobserver.com/news/business/article223045445.html.

17. Ronald Brownstein, "The Coalition of Transformation vs. the Coalition of Restoration," *The Atlantic*, November 21, 2012, www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2012/11/the-coalition-of-transformation-vs-the-coalition-of-restoration/265512/.

18. Ronald Brownstein, "How the Election Revealed the Divide between City and

Country,” *The Atlantic*, November 17, 2016, www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/11/clinton-trump-city-country-divide/507902/.

19. A “boomburb” is defined as an incorporated city of more than 50,000 residents that experienced double-digit growth each decade since 1970. See Robert E. Lang and Jennifer B. LeFurgy, *Boomburbs: The Rise of America’s Accidental Cities* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2007).

20. Writing in 1965, the urban economist Wilbur Thompson developed “the urban-size ratchet” model to differentiate large-scale metro spaces that typically continue to grow and rarely, if ever, lose population from smaller urban areas that may operate at scales that are less sustainable. Thompson suggests that with scale comes industrial diversification, increased political clout, fixed infrastructure and capital investments, self-sustaining local markets, and innovation stemming from human capital that “almost ensure its continued growth and fully ensure against absolute decline,” Wilbur R. Thompson, *A Preface to Urban Economics* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965), p. 24.

21. See Mark Muro and Jacob Whiten, “Geographic Gaps are Widening while U.S. Economic Growth Increases,” *The Avenue* (blog), January 23, 2018, www.brookings.edu/blog/the-venue/2018/01/22/uneven-growth/; Adie Tomer and Joseph Kane, “Mapping Freight: The Highly Concentrated Nature of Goods Trade in the United States,” Global Cities Initiative, The Brookings Institution, November 2014, www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Srvy_GCIFreightNetworks_Oct24.pdf; Jay Shambaugh, Ryan Nunn, and Becca Portman, “Eleven Facts about Innovation and Patents,” The Brookings Institution, The Hamilton Project, December 2017, www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/thp_20171213_eleven_facts_innovation_patents.pdf.

22. Although with the Des Moines metro population at nearly 700,000, Iowa comes the closest to the blue metros, red states model that we posit here.

23. David F. Damore and Robert E. Lang, “Beyond Density & Diversity: Understanding the Socio-Cultural Geography of Contemporary Presidential Elections,” Brookings Mountain West Policy Report, September 2016, p. 12, https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/brookings_pubs/42/.

24. Texas, for instance, has a larger GDP than Canada, while Florida’s GDP approaches that of Mexico’s.

25. Rodney Ho, “Multiple TV, Film Productions Not Coming to Georgia Due to ‘Heartbeat’ Abortion Bill as Backlash Builds,” *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, May 22, 2019, www.ajc.com/blog/radiotv/talk/multiple-film-productions-not-coming-georgia-due-heartbeat-abortion-bill-backlash-builds/tszYUIF6Pn20JCpf2XRMRI/.

26. Robert E. Lang, Andrea Sarzynski, and Mark Muro, “Mountain Megas: America’s Newest Metropolitan Places and a Federal Partnership to Help Them Prosper,” The Brookings Institution, Metropolitan Policy Program Report, July 20, 2008, pp. 1–68, 12–17, www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/IMW_full_report.pdf.

27. Wilbur Zelinsky, *The Cultural Geography of the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1973), p. 110.

28. Charles Mahtesian, "How Trump Rewired the Electoral Map," *Politico Magazine*, February 7, 2020, www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/02/07/election-2020-new-electoral-map-110496.

29. Zelinsky, *The Cultural Geography of the United States*, pp. 118–19.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

31. See Arthur C. Nelson and Robert E. Lang, *Megapolitan America* (Chicago: American Planning Association Press, 2011), pp. 214–15.

32. Four of these metros in this group have populations that are greater than 800,000 (McAllen, Texas; El Paso, Texas; Allentown, Pennsylvania; Sarasota, Florida), five have populations exceeding 700,000 (Fort Myers, Florida, Greensboro, North Carolina, Colorado Springs, Colorado, Lakeland, Florida, Akron, Ohio) and 600,000 (Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Madison, Wisconsin; Daytona, Florida; Augusta, Georgia; Toledo, Ohio), and three have populations of 570,000 or greater (Palm Bay, Florida; Durham, North Carolina; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania). Note that roughly a third of the Augusta, GA MSA is in South Carolina and an eighth of the Allentown, PA MSA is in New Jersey.

33. All interviews were conducted by Elaine Silverstone, a research assistant and doctoral student in the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

34. Bernice B. Brown, "Delphi Process: A Methodology Used for the Elicitation of Opinions of Experts," RAND Document No: P-3925, September 1968, www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/papers/2006/P3925.pdf.

35. The regions identified in the stylized state maps do not necessarily follow county boundaries since, in some instances, particularly in the western states that tend to have fewer counties that are geographically much larger compared to counties in the other regions, counties contained in the MSAs may have rural communities that are distinct from the urban spaces. However, the data we present throughout the book are aggregated at the county level within each MSA.